



Huntertown, IN
The Bronze Star

FIRST SERGEANT BRIAN SCHLATTER

A normal day in Iraq for Army Reservist 1SG Brian Schlatter consisted of waking up at 6 a.m. to perform physical training, and from there, "it could change in a heartbeat," he said.

"My job in Fallujah was to mentor no less than five Iraqi army battalion sergeants major at any time about American leadership," Schlatter said.

Three to four days a week, Schlatter's life was all about meetings – Iraqi army battalion and brigade staff meetings, Military Transition Team brigade staff meetings, Marine staff meetings and Fallujah City Council meetings. He also observed Iraqi army battalions training. In between all these meetings, Schlatter would go out on foot patrols with the Iraqi army and supervise infantry missions that the Marines would give to the Iraqi army.

Schlatter arrived in Fallujah, Iraq, on Aug. 21, 2005, as the Military Transition Team noncommissioned officer. Two days later, on Aug. 23, 2005, shrapnel from an improvised explosive device struck Schlatter in his left forearm while he was the gunner in the turret of an up-armored Humvee.

He returned to duty status the very next day.

"It was very important to me to return to duty the next day to set the tone to the Iraqi army that the new Military Transition Teams were not going to run and hide after the first attack," Schlatter said. "I believe in leading by example, so I wanted all the Iraqi army to see me training the next day. My two goals here were to stress to the Iraqi army that weapons training is important, and that a small wound does not mean you need to go on leave."

During the rest of his deployment in Iraq, Schlatter was part of a nine-man American team that lived with more than 500 Iraqi soldiers in an abandoned factory in downtown Fallujah.

During his duties, Schlatter placed himself at great risk several times trying to render aid to wounded Iraqi soldiers. On no fewer than three occasions, he accompanied the Quick-Response Force that went to the aid of Iraqi soldiers in enemy contact.

In recognition of his commitment and dedication, Schlatter received the first Purple Heart in the 80th Division since World War II and a Bronze Star.

